Make Safe Driving Your Business

October 4-8, 2004 is Drive Safely Work Week!

Driver error contributes to approximately 90 percent of these crashes. How safe are your employees?

- Every 5 seconds a crash occurs on our nation's roadways.
- Every 7 seconds a property damage crash occurs.
- Every 10 seconds there is a traffic-related injury.
- Every 12 minutes someone dies in a crash.

Sponsored by the Network of Employers for Traffic Safety, Drive Safely Work Week is a national workplace traffic safety campaign designed to help employers protect their employees by promoting safe driving on and off the job.

This year's campaign focuses on five positive driving behaviors that every employee can incorporate into their driving to ensure their safety on the road and the safety of others. The campaign also encourages your employees to take a hard look at their driving by asking the question: How safe is YOUR driving?

How can your company plan a successful Drive Safely Work Week?

Click here to access the Corporate Plan of Action designed to help you prepare a successful and memorable Drive Safely Work Week campaign. Here you will find examples on how to use the many campaign materials and tools available this year.

Visit the DSWW e-Tool Kit for more tools and resources to promote your campaign!

The e-Tool Kit is loaded with information, activities, and messages that are helpful in launching a successful campaign. And to leave a lasting message among employees, the DSWW CD-Rom—in addition to containing all of the campaign materials—includes innovative and unique e-promotional tools perfect for today's computer-driven workplace, including a screen saver, an e-greeting card, and animated flash media messages.

Unsafe at any speed – driving when fatigued

Being overextended at trying to "do it all" and "have it all," often means operating on less than the optimal amount of sleep. It's a common complaint in the modern world, with full-time work, domestic duties, and a few minutes of exercise, there just aren't enough hours in the day. And to make matters worse, more productive hours are being "robbed" from us because of the congestion on many of our nation's roadways. Employees are sitting in traffic and experiencing significant travel delays as they commute to work or drive for work.

Sleep is a critical factor in highway safety. As Americans become more sleep-deprived, the number of crashes on our roadways involving drowsy drivers is increasing. Fatigue contributes to more than

100,000 crashes each year. The result is often fatal for sleeping drivers and those in the vehicle they hit.

Nearly three-quarters of adults in America (71%) drive a car to and from work, and many are fatigued drivers, according to the National Sleep Foundation's 2002 Sleep in America poll. More than one-fourth of survey respondents said they have driven drowsy to or from work at least a few days a month, 12% drove drowsy a few days a week and 4% said they drove drowsy every day or almost every day.

Sleep deprivation and fatigue make lapses of attention more likely to occur and may play a role in behavior that can lead to crashes attributed to other causes. Fatigue slows your reaction time, decreases awareness, impairs judgment (just as alcohol or drugs) and can lead to falling asleep at the wheel. Taking over-the-counter or prescription medications or drinking alcohol, on top of being fatigued, will seriously compound an already dangerous situation.

Employers can incorporate fatigue management into safety programs and implement a proactive training program to educate all employees about the risks of driver fatigue and how to avoid it. Through instruction, they learn the risks of driving when tired, how to prevent driver fatigue, and what actions to take if they experience fatigue while driving. NETS recently developed Asleep at the Wheel? A Wake-Up Call for Drowsy Drivers, a CD-Rom-based program with awareness materials and information to help all employees to be more alert behind the wheel whether they drive for work or to and from work.